

DE: ...<sup>11</sup>I tried to think of what I could do<sup>6</sup> and all he could think of was missiles. There is quite an obvious other point, given what he actually did and that is - send troops which he actually did. But that is a deterrent, it's a strong deterrent. Alright, that's the question.

MIKOYAN It's very good question good idea but it never came to my mind. And nobody from Harvard ...

DE: All these things I'm raising are not in the Harvard stuff.

MIKOYAN: I only mean that everybody who dealt with it, they didn't think about it.

DE: But what about this contingency, which, again, I've never seen anybody consider I'll just get you to repeat. What I'm getting from you is, that you never heard discussion of the possibility that the U.S. not knowing that you were putting anything in, either troops or missiles, might go ahead with earlier plans and hit Cuba before the election, before the missiles were ready. You never heard? Is that correct? If you think about it, doesn't it seem a rather obvious concern?

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 2

MIKOYAN: Yes, now after you ...

MBG: After the fact.

DE: And considering that Castro was preparing for a possible invasion, didn't Castro or anybody, Castro, if he was going to get invaded, he wouldn't worry whether Russian missiles half in place will be discovered in the course of that invasion, what does he care.

MIKOYAN: He was angry. He talked with Alexei \_\_\_\_\_. By the way, did you meet Alexei \_\_\_\_\_?

DE: Is he in Moscow?

MIKOYAN: He's in Moscow.

DE: Oh, no.

MIKOYAN: Alexei \_\_\_\_\_ told me that after everything was disclosed, he said, Fidel said to Alexei \_\_\_\_\_, - if you only asked me how to do it, I would have given you my advice. And you only did it as you wanted to do it. And they did it like they did in Siberia, just the same layout. This is absolutely foolish. And he said, Fidel - I could

have given you advice to pretend that you were building farms for cattle, could have done it but different model.

DE: But that's the question of concealing and I'm really asking a different question. Castro, if he's contemplating being invaded, he wouldn't be concerned too much about whether the Russians will be found - quote - with their pants down, found unready, in the course of that. It won't make much difference to him. But the Soviets would be very worried about that. They would have failed to deter the attack because they hadn't told the U.S. and they would lose casualties. They would be fully involved in the invasion. It would be worse than if they weren't there.

MIKOYAN: Of course I think the missiles themselves have to be destroyed by the personnel.

DE: If there was an invasion, but 40 thousand troops, are they captured like the Bay of Pigs?

MIKOYAN: No, they had an order to fight.

DE: But they would either fight or die or be captured.

MIKOYAN: I know from people who are there, officers.

DE: No, what I'm saying is, it would be a horrible situation. I'll tell you what I'm driving at.

MIKOYAN: Oh, I see, Americans couldn't know that they would fight with the .....

DE: Can the Soviets keep secret, they've just lost 40 thousand troops there? They hadn't admitted they were there.

MIKOYAN: I believe this could be a beginning of an escalation.

DE: When the missiles were discovered on October 15th and they were discussed then on the 16th, one of the first suggestions made was, - if we just go over quietly and hit those missiles without admitting we've done it, the Soviets would have the option of keeping quiet about the whole thing. They would just ignore it. They've lost their missiles. But they had not admitted that there were missiles over there, so they'll just let it go. We've destroyed the missiles, we don't say anything, they don't say anything and that's the end of it. Do you think that was possible that if that had happened?



MIKOYAN: I think that in this case, our protest against  
[INAUDIBLE] ... the violence. They will not admit that  
they were.

DE: I should say, that's actually what our people  
predicted. They were saying, - they will protest that  
there were attacks and they'll never admit that there were  
missiles there, which might be alright. The whole thing  
then is closed and it won't be a big incident. They won't  
feel that their prestige has suffered too much and we've  
gotten rid of the missiles. And the Republicans will have  
to be happy that we attacked something over there. They  
will be happy whatever we attacked. What I'm really  
getting to say is though, the troops are a different  
matter. If we attack or invade the place, it's one thing  
if the Soviets could pretend they had no missiles there.  
But if they lose a lot of troops, including if we have them  
captured, they can't pretend that we didn't attack their  
troops. So the Soviets are really committed. Those troops  
commit the Soviets in a way that the missiles did not  
commit them. They would have to say that their own troops  
have been captured or killed. And we might actually  
capture them. So, it was a very great risk to the Soviets.  
Now, here's what I'm leading up to; I think that, tacitly

at least, they had to have a plan, basically a plan to at least try to discourage Kennedy from attacking prior to the election, to discourage him. They could either consider it impossible, which would have been wildly foolish, that he would attack before the election. I can't believe that the Soviets would be that foolish. I don't believe that. Or they would have to say, we're taking a risk here before the election, that there may be an invasion. We've got to persuade Kennedy not to invade before the election. And, I think that I have the answer to what their plan was for doing that. Now, this brings up a new subject and that is, - why was there a flood, namely six or seven, I should say assurances by Dobrynin and others of a peculiar nature which is, - starting in September Dobrynin saw Bobby Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, Ted Sorenson and then other people saw Fullbright I believe. There was a great collection of visits, all of which had the following characteristics, first of all, there was an open character which was - we're reassuring you that this material we're sending is only defensive. Don't worry about it. There was all this publicity about it. Don't worry about it, it's all defensive. But there was a second part of the interviews, two other points which have never been explained. One is, he kept saying - we are not going to cause you any trouble before the elections. And there was

a third point which is another whole subject, but in each of these he said - we are going to raise the issue of Berlin after the elections but we won't do it before the elections. So these are two separate things, we won't cause you any trouble before the elections and specifically we won't cause you trouble on Berlin before the elections but we will cause you trouble on Berlin, he almost put it in those words we are going to give you a hard time on Berlin after the elections. Let me put the Berlin thing aside for the moment. The question is - what was the meaning of those statements all the time - we're not going to give you any trouble before the elections. I can tell you that each person who heard them found that a puzzling statement because they said - <sup>^</sup>but you are causing us trouble." Almost everyone said, - what do you mean, you're not causing us any trouble? You're giving us tremendous trouble before the elections with the Republicans on this other material. If it meant anything, in other words, it means - you don't know what trouble is. We're not causing you real trouble. You're going to have a lot of trouble but not before the elections. Again and again persons said - are you crazy? Then they found the Berlin statement perplexing because as several people said to Dobrynin, - look if you're going to cause us trouble on Berlin don't think you're being nice to us about the elections, if



you're going to give us trouble, you give it whenever you want. Do it right now, it doesn't make any difference to us. Remember that if there is a question of Berlin pressure, the President could use that in the elections as well as otherwise. It's a good Cold War thing. He didn't need it after the elections, it would be just as good before the elections. And they kept saying, elections don't matter here. Do the Berlin thing whenever you want to. There was also a clear signal there that Berlin is somehow connected, in the Russian mind, with Cuba.

MIKOYAN: Of course, Dobrynin did not know anything.

DE: No he didn't know. He was obviously just told to tell these things.

MIKOYAN: He was instructed to tell Kennedy that there were no difficulties from Cuba(?).

DE: Also, mention another thing that's never raised in this discussion and here is a big gap now, between the Soviet side of the discussion this year and the U.S. side, you've seen Ray Klein's piece probably in the Foreign Affairs.



MIKOYAN: Ray who?

(*late '89*)  
DE: Ray <sup>Cline</sup>Klein who was the Director of Intelligence at the time. He wrote an article, an issue or two ago, commenting on the blight(?) stuff and the Harvard, Moscow meetings, commenting on it and saying - these are all wrong. One important point; "I believe<sup>d</sup> then and I believe now that Berlin was a major issue here." Now, there's no question that the Americans at the time believed after they found the missiles that this was connected with Berlin. I'll mention two ways it could be connected, that this was a Berlin crises as well as a Cuban crises, they believed that then. All the Soviets commenting on this have either ignored that point, they never mentioned Germany or Berlin or they deny it. They say, as far as they know there is no connection. I'm telling you now, one reason that the U.S. connected it so much at the time was, that, Dobrynin and others, including, by the way, Krushchev himself always raised Berlin in the same breath almost as Cuba in the months before this, in September and October. If you look at the conversations you see that there's a discussion of Cuba and then in the next paragraphs, the Russian brings up Berlin. By the way, <sup>at</sup>when we want to talk about is Berlin, and that includes from Gromyko's visit. What will Gromyko talk about when he comes to see the President? We don't

know. Maybe he will reveal the missiles. They are afraid of that because they're not ready, they haven't decided what to do yet. He talks about Berlin. That's his main subject. So the \_\_\_ definitely took this as a signal that the Soviets had to take it this way, the Soviets were focusing U.S. attention on Berlin at that precise moment, for some reason, which has never become clear totally.

MIKOYAN: Perhaps to draw attention to some other place.

DE: One possibility is to distract them but you see that can't be the whole thing because they were meanwhile, very visibly, \_\_\_\_\_ in Cuba, other stuff and it was a major political issue. It wasn't a distraction, we're looking at Cuba, very importantly. They wanted them also to look at Berlin for some reason, which I'm saying has never been quite clear. One possibility is, I can think of a couple, one, by the way is to plant the notion in the U.S. minds right away, if you find these missiles and if you touch them, Berlin is of great interest to us. Berlin, Berlin, Berlin, we're ready to give you trouble in Berlin. We're all braced for it. And that's what the U.S. did think right away. Remember Kennedy was convinced, unlike some others, that Berlin would be hit if he did this.

MIKOYAN: I also think so.

DE: I think that the Soviets had tried to plant that idea as a deterrent, which is a reasonable thing to do, from a deterrent thing. But that's not perhaps the only thing. The next question is - what was the meaning then of all this - we won't give you trouble of any kind. And they kept saying, well what were they referring to in the way of giving trouble? Well, here's another thing - they had planned to put the missiles in before the election. They were doing that. Dobrynin didn't know that but the people who gave him his orders knew that. And they knew that would be a lot of trouble for Kennedy one way or the other. Do you have a sense of what he might have meant, why was he saying - we won't give you trouble till after the election?

MIKOYAN: Perhaps you are absolutely right, your guess that he meant the real trouble was not what he was doing now.

DE: He was saying that at least but why were they raising the point? Why were they making this assurance?

MIKOYAN: Because he wanted maybe \_\_\_\_\_ but he wanted to maintain friendly relations with Kennedy.



[WOMAN TALKING IN RUSSIAN TO MIKOYAN].

DE: I'm about to give you an explanation but before I do that, if you have any thoughts as to what the meaning of these things could be or how these things could go together. For instance, why the assurances, what was the desired effect of the assurances and why, on the other hand, the warnings on Berlin? See, by the way, one could well ask, - if they're going to give trouble on Berlin, why signal it before hand? Wait until after the elections. Now, you could say - well he wanted to keep the friendship of Kennedy so he's giving him one <sup>up</sup> on that on Berlin. But, by the way, that raises then the question which is a very important question, to which I do not know the answer, - what were the plans of the Soviets on Berlin?

MIKOYAN: I think that perhaps Khrushchev wanted to say that if you touch the island, we also can your island. Might be so but I don't think that he seriously intended to take the West Berlin.

DE: He never, by the way, went so far as to say that.

MIKOYAN: My guess is that his first and the last attempt to get it was 1958.

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 13

DE: Really. Not '61?

MIKOYAN: I don't \_\_\_\_\_.

DE: But what about the peace treaty aspect in '61?

MIKOYAN: But this was beginning in 1958.

DE: Yes, but what about the pressure in Vienna? He said, we're going to sign a peace treaty by the end of the year. That was his last words and then Kennedy said, - then it will be a very cold winter.

MIKOYAN: This was the second ultimatum. The first one was ..

DE: In '58.

MIKOYAN: In '58.

DE: Which he raised and then in '61 in Vienna ...

MIKOYAN: He also gave ultimatum through May, six months. In '61 he repeated it but I don't think that \_\_\_\_\_

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 14

DE: Seriously in '61 you don't think?

MIKOYAN: I don't think so but well, I have one  
recollection which I told those people.

MBG: At Harvard.

MIKOYAN: But of course I can't just tell you when I  
listened to him and his words were - the Berlin issue is a  
\_\_\_\_\_ tail, which we can, ( ... English for this) pull  
that tail in \_\_\_\_\_. Whenever we think it appropriate  
for us.

MBG: You're quoting Khrushchev?

MIKOYAN: These are the words which I, myself, heard ...

DE: Khrushchev say.

MIKOYAN: Yeah.

DE: But you don't remember when.



MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 15

MIKOYAN: This is very difficult to tell. This is of course after 1959.

DE: After '59.

MIKOYAN: But, after '61 or [INAUDIBLE].

DE: You know another analogy he used, I think, to McCoy(?) was you have bunions, corns and we have bunions and corns. You step on our corns and we can step on your corns. He said that, he said when we feel like it, similar analogy.

MIKOYAN. Bunions?

DE: A corn on your toes.

MBG: It's painful.

DE: I don't know how to describe it. What is it?

MBG A corn?

DE: A bunion, how do you tell him what a bunion is.

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 16

MBG: Well, where the bone comes out from the foot, you know. It's tender.

DE: Tender like gout.

MBG: So, if somebody steps on your corns or bunions, cause everybody has corns and bunions on their feet.

MIKOYAN: Yeah, but these words were the tail. They meant that this was not \_\_\_\_\_. This was to get some concessions ....

DE: <sup>el'ne</sup> Klein believes then and still obviously, he was head of Intelligence then.

MBG: From what years was he head?

DE: Oh, I don't remember when but in '62 he was and he said, he still believes that the major purpose of this whole thing, first he discounts the whole invasion. He's wrong there. But he didn't know it then. One thing, Gartoff(?) tells me that Klein who was then Director of Intelligence, on analysis, did not know about Mongoose.

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 17

MBG: How is that possible?

DE: Mongoose is operations. Gartoff who is Intelligence had been in CIA, was now working for Alexei Johnson, the number two man in the State Department.

MIKOYAN Johnson?

DE: Ray Gartoff.

MIKOYAN: He worked in the State Department?

DE At this time, in '62 but earlier he had been CIA under Klein. He said that Klein definitely told him, he did not know about Mongoose and Gartoff did not know Mongoose. They were trying to make estimates of the Soviet action without knowing what the Soviets knew, that there was this huge operation going on. Okay, so Klein discounts that but he says, wrongly, I am still convinced that the main purpose, let's just say a purpose, of Khrushchev in this whole operation was to bring pressure on Berlin, that he wanted to change the balance.

MIKOYAN No, no, I cannot believe it.



DE: Now, let's not even investigate or argue about whether it was the main purpose. I will say, it seems to me, at this point, there is a lot of evidence that there was something on Berlin, that he did have in mind doing something on Berlin after he had disclosed the missiles. I can agree that it's possible, there was nothing. A possibility is that the only reason he kept mentioning Berlin was to warn the U.S. that if they attacked Cuba, they would get something on Berlin. That may have been his only reason. On the other hand, it's also logical that he would want to get some benefit out of having the missiles there. And where would he want to get the benefit?

MIKOYAN: Meaning, will you take off those missiles if you ...

DE: No, not trade away the missiles, no, no, no, no, that's not what I mean, some benefit out of changing the balance, putting the U.S. off balance, showing that the U.S. had to accept parity, missiles in Turkey, missiles in Cuba, - parity, very symbolic, important thing would have just occurred to me. What use can he make of that parity? Presumably he wanted to make some use of it, life would be better somehow, once he established that parity. Where

would it be better? Berlin is the logical place. Is it  
not? No?

MIKOYAN: I don't think so because after the \_\_\_\_\_ of 1958  
he understood that the United States would never give up  
Berlin.

?  
DE: There was a serious confrontation in Berlin, I think  
it was as late as '63, isn't that right, in October, there  
was some interference with access or something in '63 even  
after the crises.

MIKOYAN: Yes, yes, there were different things and  
especially when the \_\_\_\_\_ came to Berlin to have a  
meeting there.

DE: When was that?

MIKOYAN: I don't remember exactly but I remember that my  
father who was a pilot(?) in Germany, he was a commander of  
\_\_\_\_\_.

DE: A pilot?

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 20

MIKOYAN: A pilot, yeah, but commander of \_\_\_\_\_. He had a task to make flights for West Berlin. So, in order to cause those ....

DE: Sonic booms?

MIKOYAN: Yes.

DE: Really, you did that too. Did he do that?

MIKOYAN: Yes.

MBG: That was some father.

DE: When exactly did he do that?

MIKOYAN: Over the, Bundestag.

DE: When the Bundestag was there? And he actually did that?

MIKOYAN: Yes, he himself.

DE: He, personally did that?



7!

MIKOYAN: Oh, yes.

MBG. Fantastic.

DE: Do you know that the U.S. did sonic booms over Managua in 1984. Did you know that? And just when we were claiming there were MIGS there, MIGS were coming to Managua. They <sup>?</sup>did MIG sonic booms over Hanoi in 1964, '65. Again as a threat to try to get some response.

MBG: Dan come back to the answer to your question about why the study reassurance(?) is, it's not quite clear to me.

DE: This is very important. Let's distinguish between actually taking Berlin, that's a very ambitious goal. Let's suppose he put that out of his mind, he could still hope to improve the [INTERRUPTION]. [TAPE CUT].

Alright, well here is what I'm getting to. I raise one last puzzle that has to be explained. We were just questioning about whether it was pressing on Berlin. I was just going to say, it wasn't necessarily a question of taking Berlin. It could be Germany rather than Berlin. In other words he wanted to press the U.S. into recognizing the GDR and Berlin, as you say, was a tail he could pull on

Recognized  
DDR,  
Ganderson  
Hans Rupp

that. But he could expect better results from pulling the tail or pressing on Berlin, on Germany, without even mentioning Berlin. So, it might not have been Berlin, it might have been Germany that was the real issue. Do you actually know of any ambitions with respect to Germany at that time?

MIKOYAN: Well this was his idea which he did not part(?) ever to make \_\_\_\_\_ officially recognized by the West.

DE: After all there's a lot of emphasis in the Soviet interviews on the fact that he, if I read it correctly that he had felt somewhat embarrassed or humiliated by failing to make progress in the fall of '61 that he had had to abandon his ultimatum or move back from it.

MIKOYAN Domestic situation?

DE: No, that he just felt this had been a disappointment to him, that his ultimatum at Vienna had not gotten any results. Although another interpretation is that he was quite happy after the <sup>W</sup>all that he no longer felt any great pressure. But in the American interpretation it's usually assumed that he had felt somewhat humiliated by the exposure of the bad balance, unfavorable balance in the

fall of '61 in the Gilpatrick~~\*~~ speech and other speeches, that the missile gap favored the United States, that this was embarrassing, that they had to back off from their statements that there was \_\_\_\_ . And that he had not signed a peace treaty. So one could think that he wanted to even that one up, just like the missiles in Turkey. If the missiles in Turkey are an embarrassment, the failure to move ahead on DDR, must have also been an embarrassment and both could be settled by this move that he would now, now we'll talk about the DDR and we'll clear that up some way. But you don't know specifically. You say just in general. Do you know anyone who might know on that, what were they thinking about in terms of Germany? Gromyko, he's dead but.

MIKOYAN: He died, yes. Perhaps Khrushchev's son.

MBG: He may call us back today

MIKOYAN: But he's not always objective, you see. For instance, evidently, that Khrushchev met Kennedy in Vienna not as he had to, he was even impolite, no? And he behaved.

MBG: They say as a boor.

MIKOYAN: Yes.

DE: Not that far, no. No one said that. Just that he was tough, very aggressive and tough.

MIKOYAN: So, my explanation was that, first of all, after the Bay of Pigs, [UNINTELLIGIBLE] ... . Then I think he believed him to very young and still very much in power, the Pentagon, CIA and ...

DE: You think he did believe that?

MIKOYAN: I do believe but if you ask him, Sergei, he would say no. He respected Kennedy. He was of a very good opinion of him and he said that unlike Eisenhower who always asked his advisor, Dulles, this man answered by himself. He did not need any assistance.

DE: Why did he make this tough ultimatum then which certainly bothered Kennedy? Well, that's your question. You think he was intimidating Kennedy a bit.

MIKOYAN: I think so but if you ask Sergei, he would give no explanation.



MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 25

DE: Okay, so then there may have been a focus on Germany. However and this is important to me, was there any urgency on Germany that it had to be settled as fast as possible, in November rather than December, December rather than January? Do we know of anything urgent?

MIKOYAN: I think that after the wall and when exactly the wall was ... August, '61.

DE: Now, I'll sum this up and I'll give you.

MIKOYAN: August.

DE: '61

MIKOYAN: '61 and they met in Vienna in June?

DE: In May, early June, first week in June. I always get it wrong, late May or early June.

*June 3-4*

MIKOYAN: So he pressed, but no idea about the wall was then in his \_\_\_\_, absolutely.

DE: You think not.

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 26

MIKOYAN: I am sure because we talked with my father, a friend of mine who is now in New York, he remembers, not this one, another friend of mine and me, we talked with Nicolai(?) and we talked about this immigration from Berlin, from East Berlin.

DE: You personally?

MIKOYAN: Yes.

DE: You and your father?

MIKOYAN: Yes and a friend of mine. And we discussed it, if each day some thousand people weren't so, what they will do and also economically what can they do with all that. And that friend of mine expressed the idea about, not the wall exactly, but about division of two Berlins and not permitting people to go and my father said, this was impossible.

DE: Because of the four power rights, because of the occupying rights, you mean?

MIKOYAN: Well, I can talk with that friend of mine but we often recall the episode because this was weeks before wall was constructed, just weeks. So I think this was in summer. So this means only, excuse me, that when Khrushchev talked with Kennedy in Vienna he still didn't even think about this. If he thought he would have talked with my father and other people.

DE: Was your father the number two man or the closest man to Khrushchev at that time?

MIKOYAN: In the foreign affairs, yes.

DE: Who else was important then in foreign.

MIKOYAN: The Minister was the same, Gromyko but he was not important. He was just a yes man.

DE: Gromyko says now he was worried about Cuba that he too thought it would not work.

MIKOYAN: He might be but he concealed this well enough.

DE: Were your father's worries actually stilled after Berushov's(?) report? Did he believe Berushov or did he

*Biryuzov*

just keep quiet after that?

MIKOYAN: No he said, his words were - he came back and told all this, that Fidel agreed which I could not imagine. Then he said that he and his two engineers, military engineers, specialist of the missile who went there, they as experts said that everything was okay. My father had no argument to \_\_\_\_.

DE: But did he personally believe privately?

MIKOYAN: No, no, he did not believe it. He said that Marshall was a fool.

DE: So, what did your father think would happen then? He thought it would be discovered?

MIKOYAN: This was his position.

DE: What did he think Kennedy would do? Did you discuss this with him during that summer before the missiles went?

MIKOYAN No, after.



MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 29

DE: When did you first hear about the missiles?

MIKOYAN: He did not say a word about the missiles.

DE: When did you first learn about it?

MIKOYAN: It was a top secret.

DE: Much higher than top secret.

MIKOYAN: Yes, even much higher, even much higher. So, I  
| didn't know anything and Sergei also didn't know anything

DE: Did he know during the crises, once Kennedy spoke?

MIKOYAN: Yes and then when we flew to \_\_\_\_\_ America.

DE: Then he talked to you more confidentially?

MIKOYAN: With me and with his assistant at my presence.

DE: But that was the first you discussed it with him, when  
you went to Cuba?

MIKOYAN: And all the week before.

DE: The week before - once Kennedy made it public, you talked. Did you ever tell you what he thought Kennedy would do? Did Kennedy do more than he expected or was it what he had expected, or what?

MIKOYAN: Well, in May, he \_\_\_\_\_ this was very dangerous because they would find out and when they find out they will strike and they will destroy Cuba.

DE: Strike is what he was worried about. Invasion also or just strike?

MIKOYAN: I think both.

DE: And Khrushchev's answer to that is only - they won't find out and when I tell them, Khrushchev tells them, he won't strike.

MIKOYAN: Too late to strike.

DE: Because they will be operational.

MIKOYAN: Yeah.

DE: And your father thought, they would strike even if they were operational?

MIKOYAN: No, no.

DE: The question was - what happened about this vulnerable period when they were not in operation.

MIKOYAN: September to ....

DE: Did they consider that the very presence of the missiles before they were operational might be enough of a deterrent? Did anybody think that? The mere fact that the Soviets have made this commitment were now involved, - we, the Soviets are now involved, we're committed. That will deter Kennedy - or is it that they were operational?

MIKOYAN: No, operational.

DE: Operational, so there was an agreement that there was a vulnerable period before.

MIKOYAN: That's why this was a risk and an adventure.

MBG: An adventure.

DE: You understand, don't you - there were Americans who were very much in favor of striking even if they were operational, even if.

MIKOYAN: I Know that there was opinion that it was better to strike even after the last letters, after the agreement 30th of October.

DE: But your father assumes that Kennedy would not go along with such a thing, is that right? He assumed that Kennedy would not be willing once they were operational.

MIKOYAN: Do you mean that there were people who would have advised to strike even when all the missiles were operational?

DE: On several grounds. First, that the missiles could be destroyed before they were fired. The second idea being ...

MIKOYAN: You only need the time to push the button.

DE: But another idea, thought would be that Khrushchev will never fire them.



MIKOYAN: They, immediate \_\_\_\_\_ in 50 minutes to be.

DE: Another was, Khrushchev will not fire them. He could fire them but he won't fire them. It would be suicidal for him to do it. Many Americans thought that way. .... Why should the Americans believe that Khrushchev would commit suicide because we were attacking Cuba with non-nuclear weapons. Why should we believe that he would allow the Soviet Union to be destroyed.

MIKOYAN: I think only because everybody knew that he was very irrational and emotional.

DE: Did he count on that? Did he count on the fact that they will fear that ....

MIKOYAN: I don't think so but even now I cannot tell you that he would have done nothing. I don't know

DE: You think he might have?

MIKOYAN: [PHRASE IN RUSSIAN] ... he would have done nothing, but I'm not sure.

DE: Aren't you aware that most Americans, military and civilian, felt quite confident that Khrushchev would do nothing?

MIKOYAN: This would have been wise but this man was unpredictable.

DE: So they were over estimating then?

MIKOYAN: Absolutely unpredictable

DE: I won't argue on that point but will come back to it. Finally, you perhaps don't know the answer to this, what was the reaction of the understanding in Moscow of the warnings that Kennedy did make on September 4th and on the 13th? We know now that the missiles were actually going in on the 13th so it's too late for his warnings to stop the missiles. The 4th, they're on the way, they're coming. But, did that worry people? Did they think of that as a commitment? As I say, you may not know the answer but it's a very interesting question. What did Nikoyan or Khrushchev think - oh, oh, now they're warning us. Don't put offensive missiles or IRBMs on that, aren't they committing themselves to an attack of some sort? Did they pay no

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 35

attention? Did they get worried at that point? You don't know.

MIKOYAN: I don't know.

DE: Who would know that? Would Akromeis(?) know?

MIKOYAN Who was Akromeis(?)?

DE: He was a young officer in Cuba. He was in Cuba.  
Somebody mentioned that

MIKOYAN: I didn't know.

DE: He might not have been high enough to know much about it though. Anybody alive who would know?

MIKOYAN: Unfortunately, maybe only Alexei could learn about it afterwards

DE: Alexei knew about the missiles at the time, right? He knew what was happening

MIKOYAN: He knew about it since May.

MIKOYAN THESIS C11  
TAPE 1B, FEB. 5, 1990  
PAGE 36

DE: So he would have reacted to these warnings. He would have said - this means something. What does it mean? Do you think there was any chance that they might have reversed and said - oh, oh, they're going to be tough about this, maybe we should not do it? How about when Gromyko then spoke? By that time you knew what was happening, right, when Gromyko spoke to Kennedy?

MIKOYAN: He knew.

DE: Gromyko knew and you knew but you also knew at that point, right?

MIKOYAN: At that point, no. I only learned after ...

DE: How did they interpret Kennedy's failure to bring the subject up? Did they think that Kennedy already knew? Do you know?

MIKOYAN: They thought he didn't know.

DE: Did not know. That was Gromyko's conclusion?

MIKOYAN: Sure.



✓

DE: I think Gromyko in his recent article, after the Moscow meeting, I haven't seen the article but I think he said in that, that he inferred from that, that Kennedy was accepting the missiles, that he did know but was accepting

MIKOYAN: It was his answer to Kundershov's(?) article.

DE: Didn't Gromyko say, - I believe from that, that Kennedy did know and that he was not saying, that he was choosing to accept them?

MIKOYAN: It's interesting. I must look again at ....

DE That concludes the questions because now I'll tell you, here at the end of this tape, what I think this adds up to

[END OF SIDE B].